

Governor Carney to Nominate Claire DeMatteis as DOC Commissioner

DeMatteis has helped lead reform efforts at Department of Correction

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney on Tuesday announced his intention to nominate Claire DeMatteis – a former senior counsel to then-U.S. Senator Joe Biden – as the next Commissioner of the Delaware Department of Correction.

The nomination will require approval by the Delaware Senate. DeMatteis would replace Commissioner Perry Phelps, who will retire on July 15. DeMatteis would be the first female Commissioner of the Delaware Department of Correction.

*“For much of the last two years, Claire has worked side-by-side with Commissioner Phelps to lead reform efforts at the Department of Correction – to make our facilities safer, to invest in new equipment and training, and to recruit correctional officers to do one of the toughest jobs in state government,” said **Governor Carney**. “Over three decades of experience in government and the private sector, Claire has worked closely with community leaders, legislators and law enforcement officials and has earned their respect and trust. I have full confidence that Claire’s experience and leadership qualities will serve our state well at the Department of Correction. I look forward to the Senate considering her nomination.”*

In June 2017, Governor Carney appointed DeMatteis to serve as his Special Assistant at the Department of Correction. In that role, DeMatteis worked alongside Commissioner Phelps, and led

implementation of [Governor Carney's plan](#) following the [Independent Review](#) into the events of February 1, 2017 at James T. Vaughn Correctional Center.

Governor Carney's plan included a 22 percent increase in starting pay for correctional officers; significant investments in new technology, equipment and training; the creation of a Labor-Management Committee to more effectively recruit officers and decrease mandatory overtime; and renewed efforts to help inmates successfully re-enter their communities.

Currently, DeMatteis is serving as Special Assistant coordinating comprehensive [re-entry initiatives](#) across six state agencies, including the Departments of Correction, Education, Labor, and Health and Social Services.

"If confirmed by the State Senate, I look forward to working with the women and men of the Delaware Department of Correction to continue to strengthen safety and security, officer recruitment and retention, and programming and services for inmates, as well as implement a coordinated path of services from an offender's entry into prison through release back into our communities," said DeMatteis. "It would be an honor to lead the state's largest law enforcement agency of dedicated correctional officers and probation and parole officers."

The Delaware Senate is expected to consider Governor Carney's nomination of DeMatteis this month.

From 2008-2016, DeMatteis served as General Counsel, Chief Compliance Officer and Chief Privacy Officer of two multi-billion dollar corporations. Previously, DeMatteis spent four years at Stradley, Ronon, Stevens & Young, a Mid-Atlantic law firm with offices in Wilmington. She was partner in charge of the firm's Delaware office from 2007-2008.

During her decade working as senior counsel for then-Senator Biden, from 1994-2004, DeMatteis served as a member of a senior team on issues involving law enforcement, women's rights, civil rights and constitutional matters. She helped guide campaign strategy, managed constituent communications and drafted legislation.

Most recently, DeMatteis served in a senior role at the Delaware Department of Labor, where she helped navigate a resolution to the recent data breach at the department, keeping the media, public and legislators well informed on the state's response and structural reforms to prevent future breaches. DeMatteis began her career working in the Delaware State Senate from 1984-1987 as a Page and Calendar Clerk. She has served state elected officials from both parties, including as legal assistant to then-Governor Mike Castle.

DeMatteis earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Delaware, and holds a law degree from Widener University Delaware Law School.

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